



# Eastern Europe Highlights from February 2023

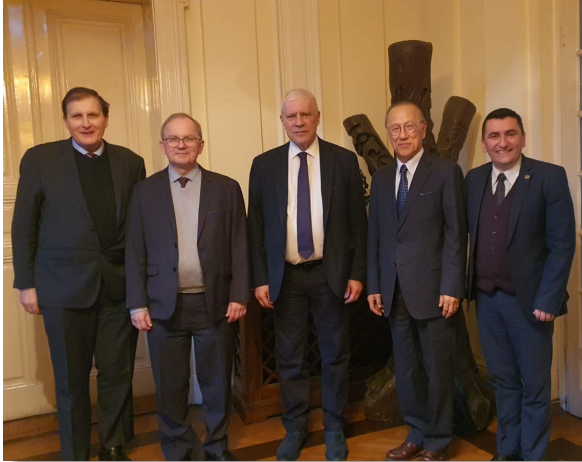
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# Balkan VIP Meetings



**Former Serbian President Boris Tadic**

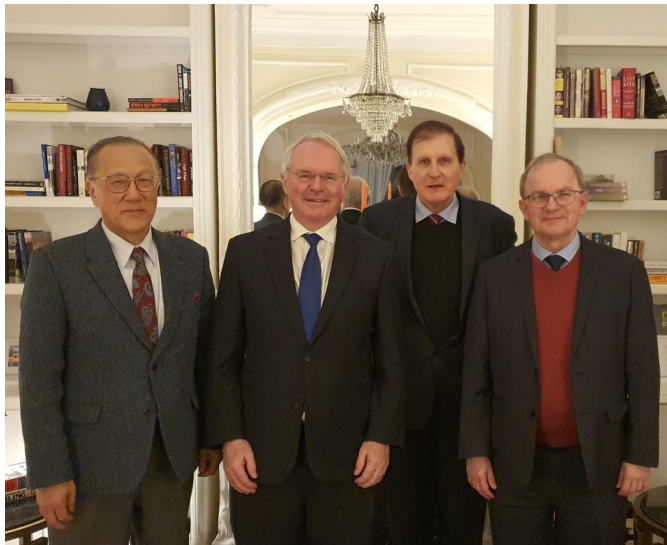


**President of Albania, HE Bajram Begaj**

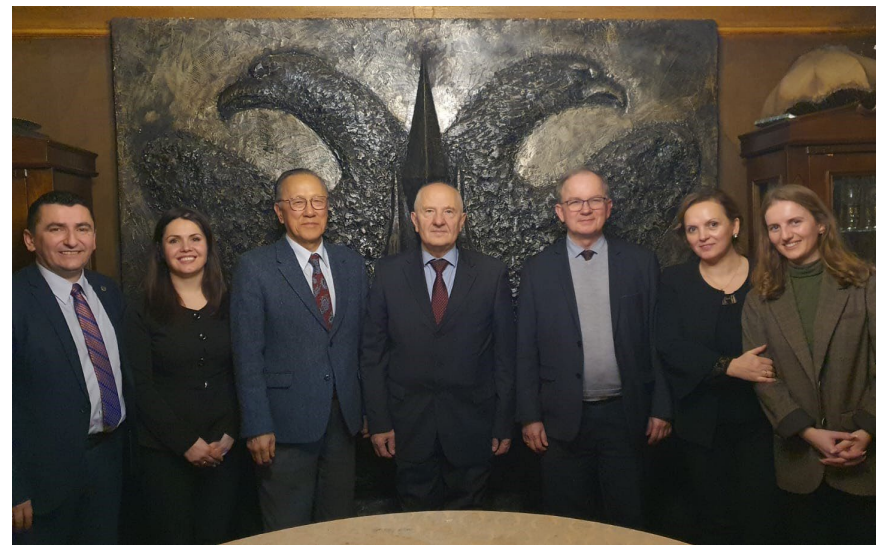


**Kosovo Prime Minister, HE Albin Kurti**

**Representing the Universal Peace Federation, Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, Jacques Marion, Mark Brann and Gani Rroshi traveled through several Balkan nations to meet current and former heads of state and government and VIPs connected with UPF**



**US Ambassador to Serbia Christopher Hill**



**Former Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu**



**Former Presidents Moisiu (Albania)  
and Vujanovic (Montenegro)**



# UPF-Albania Hosts Kosovo Anniversary Celebration



To celebrate the 15th anniversary of Kosovo's independence, the Tirana Peace Council organized an event at the Tirana Peace Embassy. Over 170 VIPs from Albania and Kosovo, including Ambassadors for Peace, attended. Well-known entertainers performed for the meeting. After a talk on UPF activities by the UPF-Albania secretary general, 12 respected personalities were honoured with the title of Ambassador for Peace. – *Gani Rroshi*





## Two Shin Albanian Cities Hold Youth Programs

In the city of Shkodra, nine people—both guests and members, mostly in their late teens—attended a one-day workshop, where they learned about the life of faith and were introduced to the Blessing. ... In the city of Fier, CARP members have been giving weekly character education lectures at one of the best high schools in the city. From April the students will write essays based on True Father's comments in his autobiography regarding youth. As students in the school hear about this program, more and more are joining. The connection with this school happened by “accident”—the school psychologist mistakenly walked into our movement’s office and came to know the Fier city leaders. — *Manjola Vasmatics*







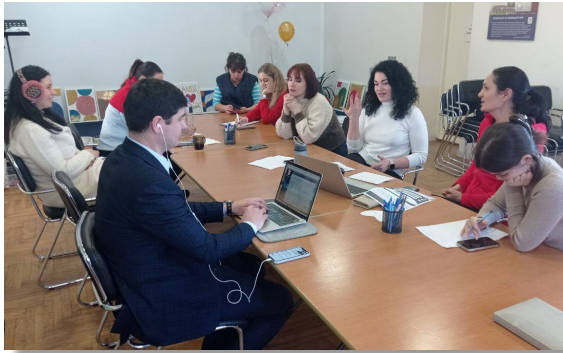
## EUME Leaders Check the Changing Tirana Peace Embassy

Dr and Mrs. Balcomb, Jack Corley, Peter Staudinger and Patrick Martin-Prevel made a brief visit to Tirana at the end of February to inspect the CIG Peace Embassy as the three upper floors are rented out for offices. Over the past months, several organizations and businesses have rented most of the available space. Starting in March, over 100 people will occupy the newly created office space. – *Jack Corley*





# Activities in Moldova I



## Family Federation

At the Sunflower Centre in Chisinau, children learned about love on Valentine's Day (14 February) and about kindness on Random Acts of Kindness Day (17 February). Mothers had group sessions with the psychologist, painted pictures, had yoga and fitness classes, and more. ... Several Sunflower Team members visited the Ukrainian Library in Chisinau in preparation for starting story therapy in the Sunflower Centre in collaboration with Lifting Hands International <https://www.liftinghandsinternational.org/>. ... Sunflower staff attended another session on self-management given by Catholic Relief Services in order to improve their work with children and adults. ... The Fairy Tale Centre in the town of Anenii Noi held many activities for children.

## UPF

During an international anthropology colloquium held at the State University of Moldova, Andrei Eșanu, the secretary general of UPF-Moldova, gave a presentation about UPF projects in the field of interreligious dialogue.

## HPHC

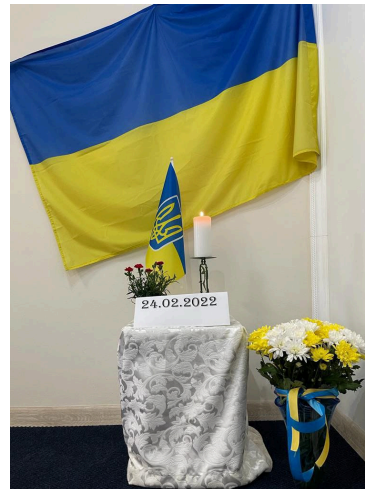
Every evening Moldovan members meet online for the national devotion condition. They read about True Parents' lives, report on their activities, and pray together for public goals. ... A recent Sunday service consisted of two yearly reports: from the Second Generation Department, given by Ivan Kolupayev, and from YSP-Moldova, given by Cornelia Garanovschi.

## YSP

At their weekly meeting, YSP members first discussed activities of the past week and then socialized and played board games. – *Sabina Nadejdin*



# Activities in Moldova II



Remembering the first anniversary of the outbreak of the Russia/Ukrainian war



Celebrating Maslenitsa



Book donation



Story telling therapy



Anenii Noi

On 24 February, the first anniversary of the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Sunflower Centre staff, children and parents joined in a tearful minute of silence in memory of the many people who lost their lives. ... *Maslenitsa*, the last day before the beginning of Lent, was celebrated at the Sunflower Centre. Children and their parents watched a performance and enjoyed pancakes, a traditional food for this day. ... IsraAID donated books on protecting the environment, which the teachers find very helpful. ... This last week the Sunflower Centre received 40 children and 15 parents. Recently it began story telling therapy, which the children really enjoy. ... The Fairy Tale Centre in Anenii Noi offered pre-school, speech therapy and other services to 26 children. – Sabina Nadejdin





## FF-Moldova Head Receives Volunteer of the Year Award

- Andrei Eșanu, the director of Family Federation in Moldova, received the Volunteer of the Year Award for “support and protection” of Ukrainian refugees through his work with the Sunflower Centre. Andrei was one of 12 outstanding volunteers who were honoured by the National Congress of Ukrainians in Moldova. The Moldovan prime minister was present at the awards ceremony and spoke, as did the ambassadors from Ukraine and the United States and the Moldova representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In addition, representatives of authorities and civil society organizations participated in the event. – Sabina Nadejdin





## Moldova YSP Director Represents Her Country in Slovenia

- At the invitation of the National Youth Council of Moldova, of which she is the vice president, YSP-Moldova Director Cornelia Garanovschi represented the organization at the Portorož Youth Health Forum 2023 in Slovenia. The event was held by the International Youth Health Organization, a network of youth organizations that works for the well-being of young people. Cornelia participated together with a representative of the Healthy Principles NGO and a professor from the medical university.— *Sabina Nadejdin*



# Activities in Romania



## Romanian CARP Discusses *The Way for Young People*

True Father's advice to young people was the focus of the latest Open Hoon Dok Hwe meeting held by Romanian CARP. Fourteen guests and nine members discussed the topic "Train Yourself in Many Fields before the Age of 30." The theme was inspired by the book *The Way for Young People*, in which True Father spoke about the importance of experiencing many things before the age of 30 so that when we reach adulthood we can focus on putting into practice what we have learned. – Miki Predescu



## Romanian CARP's Chess Club Picks Up Speed

Fifteen participants attended the latest Chess Club meeting held by Romanian CARP, including some who are passionate about chess. Because more and more people are attending the activity, we will have to buy more chess boards before the next meeting. – Miki Predescu

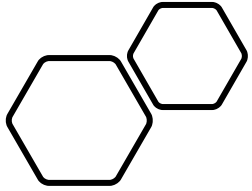




## Romantic Romanians Attend Peace Blessing Ball

Inspired by a visit from Martine Masner, the EUME Witnessing Department director, Romanian members started preparing for their first Peace Blessing Ball as a HTM activity. They invited relatives, friends, and co-workers. Three couples arrived at the event. ... A young Romanian blessed couple were the emcees. After a performance by a classical guitarist, national leader Miki Predescu gave a talk about the power of the Peace Blessing to revive couples' relationships. She conducted the Holy Wine ceremony as a "toast to love," and all the couples participated happily. The CIG missionaries and Romanian CARP members created a joyful atmosphere, and Roxana Magdalena Nicolae prepared a wonderful meal. At the end of the program, each couple was awarded a certificate: Best Dancers, Cutest Couple and Most Elegant Couple. Based on the couples' enthusiastic reaction, Romanian members are planning to make the Peace Blessing Ball an annual event. – *Miki Predescu*





## Russian Members Hold Blessing Festival with Family Club

- St. Petersburg members cooperated with a local family club called “Alive” to hold a Blessing Festival together. The couple who lead the family club prepared exercises to increase husband-wife unity. Although only a few couples received the Blessing, the spirit was very high and the CBFs and the families from the club spent the whole day together. There was even a master class on the waltz! The day ended with unison prayer and meditation. The founders of the family club are very determined to bring more couples to the Blessing Festivals. – *Marianna Sokurova*







## Russian Members Bless Neighbours at House of Culture



In Udelnaya, a town outside Moscow, several blessed families who live there held a Family Festival during a photo exhibition in the town's House of Culture. During the one day that they were there, the members blessed five couples. Aleksandr and Alyona Timofeyev were the Blessing officiators. – *Aleksandr Timofeyev*







## Russian Couples and Families Attend Two-Day Seminar

- A two-day seminar for couples who have been married 10 to 17 years, with children 12 to 16 years old, was held at the Moscow Peace Embassy. On the first day, 14 couples attended in person, and there were a total of 59 online connections. Three presentations were given: two on marital relations, by Oleg Kuzmin and Aleksandra Skonechna; and one on parent-child relations, by Elena Kalmatskaya. All the presentations were interactive, with a lot of exercises. In the evening there were discussions and even a lesson in dancing the tango, given by Olga Vakulinskaya.

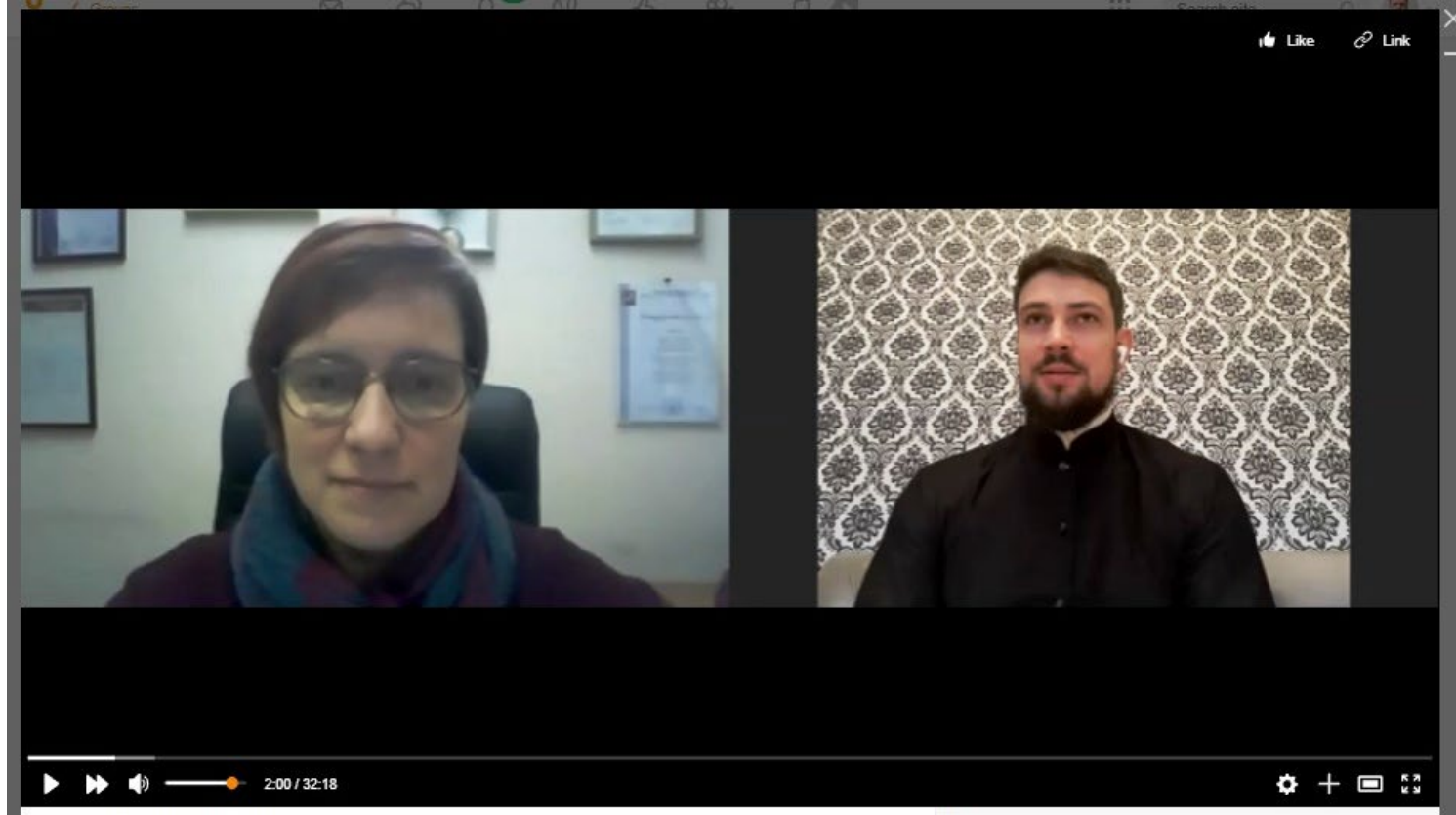


The second day consisted of training for parents and teenagers, which was conducted by Elena Kalmatskaya. A total of 43 participants came to the Peace Embassy, and there was no online component. The parent-child pairs performed interesting tasks to better know and understand each other. Those who didn't participate in the training attended sermons by Oleg Kuzmin and Oksana Salmanova, which were also part of the seminar. At the end, Russian national leader Alexey Savelyev of Russia welcomed all the parents and children. They prayed together and took a group photo.

In written reflections, the participants expressed what they liked about the seminar and what they felt needed to be improved. – *Alexey Savelyev*







## Interfaith Activists Interviewed Online by UPF-Russia

Dr. Alexander Shapiro-Suliman, secretary general of the Alliance of the Peoples of the World, visited the Moscow Peace Embassy to be interviewed by UPF-Moscow Chairman Dmitry Samko. The online interview received about 250 views. Dr. Shapiro-Suliman spoke about the alliance's goals and work. He emphasized the importance of interreligious and interethnic dialogue and of interaction between public organizations. The alliance and UPF-Russia are planning several joint projects in 2023, focusing on the theme of Year of the Teacher and Mentor. – *Dmitry Samko*

In honour of World Interfaith Harmony Week, Elena Knyazeva, the leader of UPF in the southwestern Russian city of Voronezh, conducted an online interview with Deacon Roman Krinitsyn of the Vysoko-Petrovsky Monastery in Moscow. UPF staff have known Father Roman for many years and have cooperated on service projects. During the interview, Father Roman told about the church's involvement in urban projects, what "true Orthodox family" means, how he builds relationships in his family with his wife and children, and how he overcomes difficulties in relationships. The interview attracted many viewers: 24,206 on the Odnoklassniki social network, 469 on the VKontakte social network, and 109 on YouTube. – *Elena Knyazeva*



# YSP-Russia Trains Volunteers as Youth Forum Staff



**Nine young people attended an intensive two-day training session in Moscow to become the staff for the next YSP youth forum in Russian Lapland. Four of the volunteers participated in last year's forum and now want to help, for example, by leading a team or recruiting future participants. ... The training included instruction in conducting "Peace Designer" training, discussing improvements to the forum, and connecting to each other through games and warm communication. – Elena Kalmatskaya**



# More Than 500 Russians Attend Special Great Works



**Novosibirsk**



**Moscow**



**Ulyanovsk**



**St. Petersburg**



**Ufa**



**Yekaterinburg**



**Kazan**



**Khabarovsk**



**Nizhni Novgorod**



**Kaliningrad**

A total of 535 members from across Russia joined the CheonBo Special Great Works on 4 and 5 February. These included several new HPHC members, who were given special instruction beforehand. Twelve Russian communities joined; in addition, there were five locations where a few families participated together. Though we couldn't make our goal of 1,000 people, it was a good start and condition for Russia.

For the second CheonBo Special Great Works, which are scheduled for 29 and 30 April, we will make 1,000 participants as an offering for the 5 May opening of Cheon Won Gung. – Alexei Saveliev



**Ryazan**



# Belarus Members Attend Special Great Works

- Among the many members worldwide who took part in the CheonBo Special Great Works event on 4 and 5 February, there was a large group from Belarus who gratefully participated: altogether 73 people of the First and Second Generations. About 20 gathered in the *Cheonshim Won*. For health reasons, many others participated from home. – *Olga Plotnikova*





# Belarus Members Organize Interfaith Pilgrimage



Muslim



Orthodox



Catholic



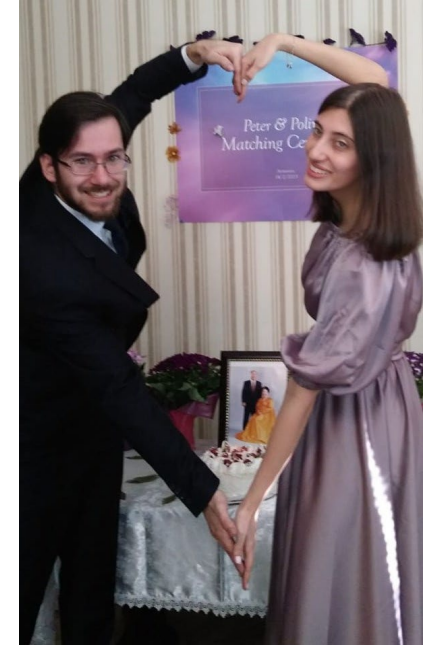
Praying together



Lunch meeting with local leaders

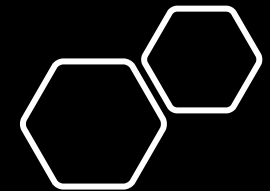
In honor of World Interfaith Harmony Week, Belarus members organized a project titled “Belarus Is the Land of God's Authority.” They invited representatives of Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodoxy to join a pilgrimage to Iwye, a town where adherents of Islam, Judaism, Orthodoxy and Catholicism lived together peacefully throughout its history. The chairman of the District Council of Deputies received the delegation and prayed with them near the town’s monument to friendship of religions. The group visited a mosque, a Catholic church and an Orthodox church, where they met and prayed together with religious leaders.— *Olga Plotnikova*



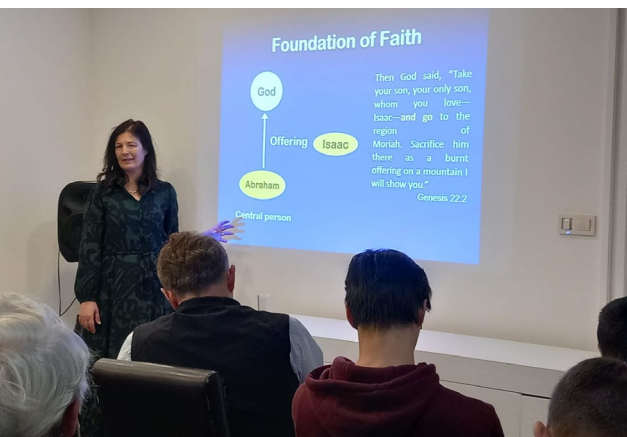


# An HTM Workshop and a Matching Ceremony in Armenia

- A one-day seminar for 48 HTM couples and members was held in Armenia. The participants included eight children, one family with three generations, as well as the family who rented their vacation home for the workshop. Kristof Kral, one of the first missionaries to Armenia, gave three lectures, and Armenian national leader Hovik Barseghyan gave one. As is the tradition, there was wonderful Armenian food and music. Everyone felt the presence of Heavenly Parent and True Parents, and when the seminar ended, nobody wanted to go home.
- A beautiful matching ceremony was held for two Second Gens: Peter Deininger from Austria and Polina Makarenko from Russia. Because of travel restrictions between their countries, they met for the first time in Armenia with their mothers and quickly decided to make the match official. The families and friends of the couple participated in this moving ceremony via Zoom. – *Hovik Barseghyan*







## Croatian Workshop Starts with DP, Continues with CB

A three-day Divine Principle workshop was held in Zagreb, Croatia. Of the 24 participants, 11 were Second Gens from Croatia, Serbia and Hungary; nine were First Gens from Croatia, Austria and Hungary; and four were viewers watching the workshop online. The lecturers were Marija Purgar, the Blessed Family Department leader for Croatia, and Tibor Krebsz, the head of the EUME Cheonbo Department. After the three-day DP workshop concluded, Tibor Krebsz gave a one-day CheonBo seminar. — *Ji-suk Baek*





Thank You!